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November 14, 1945

Hon. James Forrestal
Secretary of the Navy
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Jim:

In view of your recommendation of a central intelligence agency, I am taking the liberty of summarizing some thoughts that I have previously expressed on this subject. Last spring, I made a report on the British system of coordination of intelligence functions. You may have seen a copy of this report which had a limited circulation in Washington. In any event, as a result of work on this subject I became interested in the various proposals for a central intelligence agency in America.

The following summary expresses my views. Although these views have been somewhat influenced by the study of the British system, you will notice that I recommend a system for achieving coordination of intelligence functions which is substantially different from the British system.

Consideration of most subjects starts today with the conjectural effects of the atomic bomb. This is surely appropriate when the subject is intelligence. Assumptions are made as to these effects which are considered basic in the planning of a modern intelligence system.

It is assumed that the atomic bomb will not relieve the United States or any other first class military power of the need for a first class army, navy and air force. If this assumption is justified, it follows that the commanding officers of each of these forces should have an intelligence organization qualified to render informed and reliable estimates as to potential enemy capabilities affecting their respective missions. It is believed that air officers trained in intelligence are best qualified to estimate the capabilities of enemy air forces and that the same is true with respect to ground and naval forces. Each military service should have responsibility for intelligence within the scope of its mission in the same manner that intelligence responsibility devolves down through the lower echelons of a single military service. It is not believed that any central intelligence agency should attempt to relieve the military service of their appropriate intelligence responsibilities.

It does not follow, however, that each of the military services should maintain complete, independent and isolated intelligence organizations. This would involve needless duplication of facilities and confusion of intelligence opinion on matters affecting two or more of the military services and, perhaps, other departments of government. In the language of General Marshall "The national security is a single problem, and it cannot be provided on a piece meal basis." Intelligence, as an essential function of national security, can be adequately provided only through a comprehensive and integrated intelligence system. If the lessons of Pearl Harbor were not accepted as proof of the urgent necessity for coordination of intelligence functions between branches of the military service, and between the military services and other departments of

government, the use of atomic energy and the threat of yet undeveloped products of scientific research must now supply that proof beyond shadow of doubt.

The collection, evaluation and interpretation of information relating to scientific, military, economic and political developments throughout the world have now been recognized as presenting a major problem in the United States. This problem cannot be solved by the separate military and civilian intelligence agencies which functioned in the past with inadequate coordination under obsolete and disintegrated intelligence procedures, unworthy of being described as an American system of intelligence. We assume, then, that America must in some manner achieve coordination of intelligence functions if foreign policy and military preparation are to be synchronized on the basis of a common understanding of the capabilities and intentions of potential enemies.

On these assumptions, we approach this problem with the objective, on the one hand, of imposing intelligence responsibility on the military services within the scope of their missions and, on the other hand, of compelling the coordination of intelligence functions under one national intelligence system.

There are, it is believed, four aspects of coordination which are involved:

(1) Coordination in the collection of information.
(2) Coordination in the evaluation and collation of such information.
(3) Coordination through centralization of intelligence facilities of use to two or more military services and departments of government.
(4) Coordination of intelligence opinion in general estimates of a broad strategic nature.

Coordination in these four aspects can be achieved, it is submitted, in an integrated intelligence system revolving around a central intelligence agency set up along the following lines: Authority over this agency should be vested in the Department of Defense if it is created, in the National Security Council if the proposal of the Secretary of the Navy is adopted, or in the Secretaries of State, War, Navy and the Assistant Secretary of War for Air if the present military organization remains unchanged.

The active direction of the Central Intelligence Agency should be in a Directorate of Intelligence, consisting of the chief intelligence officers in the Army, Navy and Air Forces, a representative of the State Department and, perhaps, representatives of other departments such as the Treasury and the Department of Justice if they perform or are to perform intelligence functions having a direct relationship to the national security.

Acting under the general supervision of the Directorate of Intelligence would be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. This Director, a man of the highest intelligence qualifications available in the United States, regardless of military or civilian background, should be appointed by the President upon the advice of the Department of Defense, or the Council, or the various Secretaries described above.

The Central Intelligence Agency, which should be run by the Director, would have various departments comprising the intelligence facilities and serv-

ices of common usefulness. The number and scope of these services and facilities should be determined on the initiative of the Director, with the supervision and agreement of the Directorate, and subject to the final approval of the Department of Defense. Their number and scope cannot be fixed at this time, nor would they remain static in the future. In general, the Central Agency might have departments of economic intelligence, political intelligence, scientific intelligence, radio intercept, topography, a central photographic interpretation unit, etc. Such a list is deliberately incomplete and may, on the other hand, include fields such as political intelligence which might better be placed in the Department of State. The principle, however, would be to place intelligence facilities and services of common usefulness in the Central Agency.

In addition to its function of centralization of certain intelligence facilities and services, a second and equally important function of the Director and the Central Intelligence Agency would be the coordination, through the Directorate, of the collection, evaluation and collation of all intelligence, and the submission over the signature of each member of the Directorate of general estimates of over-all enemy capabilities.

Returning, then, to the four aspects of coordination:

Collection. The Central Intelligence Agency would not supersede or interfere with the normal collection machinery of the various services or governmental departments. Coordination in collection should be achieved by the Director through the Directorate of Intelligence. The essential elements of information required by the various services and departments represented on the Directorate should be discussed in meetings of the Directorate where collection procedures should be coordinated with full knowledge of current plans of the Chiefs of Staff and of American foreign policy. The Director would be responsible for seeing that the collection procedures agreed upon in the Directorate are carried out and that prompt and appropriate distribution of the collected information is effected both within and without the Central Agency. For example, the Director must see that the Air Forces get raw intelligence bearing on enemy air capabilities which may be collected outside of Air Force channels.

In general, the Central Agency would not itself handle collection. It certainly should not be a central agency for collection. It is believed that diversification in collection will be far more effective and that service responsibility in intelligence cannot be maintained if the military services give up their own collection machinery, such as the system of military and naval attaches. This is predicated on the assumption that coordination in collection can be achieved through the Directorate and that prompt and appropriate distribution can be assured.

Specifically, in the case of radio intercept, the entire machinery of collection should be centralized in the Central Intelligence Agency. In other specific fields, such as economic and scientific intelligence, the Central Agency might do its own above-cover collection.

This brings up the question of the organization of secret intelligence and the use of under-cover agents. It is believed that secret intelligence, including both positive intelligence and foreign counter-intelligence, should be under the control of the State Department. Regardless of what cover might be

used, an official of the State Department, presumably its representative on the Directorate of Intelligence, should be responsible for secret intelligence. It is obvious that coordination should be achieved between the State Department's work in secret intelligence and the counter-espionage work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Further coordination could be achieved by having officers from the Army, Navy and Air Forces assigned to work in secret intelligence. General coordination of Secret Intelligence requirements in the light of full knowledge of American military plans and foreign policy should be achieved on the initiative of the Director through the Directorate of Intelligence.

Coordination in the evaluation and collation of intelligence material. In this aspect of coordination the function of the Director under the supervision of the Directorate would be comparable to the function of coordinating collection. For example, evaluation and collation of intelligence material directly affecting enemy air capabilities should be handled by the intelligence organization in the Air Forces. The same would be true in the case of the Army and Navy. In some fields of common usefulness, evaluation and collation should be done in a department of the Central Intelligence Agency. There will, of course, be borderline cases such as scientific intelligence. Evaluation collation and final interpretation of scientific material of general application should be done in the Scientific Department of the Central Intelligence Agency. There will, nevertheless, be scientific intelligence of special application to enemy ground, sea or air capabilities which should be handled by the intelligence organizations of the respective American services. The Director, through the Directorate, must insure a free flow of collated material and a free interchange of scientific opinion between the various services and between the Scientific Department of the Central Agency and the military services and other interested departments of government.

Coordination through centralization of intelligence facilities or services of common usefulness. As has been stated, this centralization would be achieved through the various departments of the Central Intelligence Agency under the principle of placing intelligence facilities and services of common usefulness in the Central Agency. The scope of the work of the various departments would not be of equal extensiveness. For example, the departments dealing with political, economic and scientific intelligence might properly evaluate, collate and finally interpret all such intelligence. In the case of photographic interpretation, the Department might only provide a central unit for expert and detailed examination of photographs which would be forwarded to the appropriate users. In the case of radio intercept, the departmental function of the Central Agency might be restricted to collection and distribution within and without the Central Intelligence Agency.

Coordination of intelligence opinion in general estimates of a broad strategic nature. In the Central Intelligence Agency the Director should have a department or preferably a top staff consisting of military and civilian personnel qualified to assemble and draft general estimates of a strategic nature. An example would be an estimate of the military capabilities and intentions of a potential enemy country. The part of the estimate dealing with air capabilities would be drafted in the first instance by the intelligence organization of the Air Forces. The same would be true of the ground and naval services. The economic, political and scientific portions of the estimates would be drafted in the appropriate departments of the Central Intelligence Agency.

All the parts comprising the estimate would be assembled, discussed and, if necessary, revised and redrafted by the estimates section or staff of the Central Agency. It should be recalled that this staff should include competent air, ground and naval officers who would doubtless be in close touch with the original drafting of the portions of the estimate prepared by their respective services. The entire estimate as revised and redrafted by the staff of the Central Agency would be submitted to the Directorate. After full discussion in the Directorate the estimate, signed by each member of the Directorate, would be submitted to the State Department, the Joint Chiefs of Staff or other appropriate recipient. A member of the Directorate who disagreed with the estimate in whole or in part should be required to append his dissent setting forth the grounds on which it was based.

In this connection, the British system for achieving coordination of intelligence functions might be studied. A report on this subject has been submitted to Mr. Robert Lovett.

In conclusion, some obvious facts should be emphasized. The system herein outlined will not work, nor will any other system work, unless there is adequate training of intelligence officers, a willingness on the part of all the military services to put their most capable officers in intelligence positions, and a general and sincere recognition that coordination of intelligence functions is a vital necessity of national security.

Respectfully submitted,

(signed) William H. Jackson